
The newly elected special assembly in Nepal is poised to abolish the country's centuries-old monarchy, and declare the state a republic. This will mark the culmination of a long campaign by Nepal's Maoists to transform the nation. This report from Charles Haviland:

The stage is set; there are **cordons of police**, some with **body armour** and **shields**, and a ring of **razor wire** enclosing this complex. Crowds with balloons preparing to celebrate and shouting anti-King **slogans** are being kept some distance away.

The key vote has been postponed for a few hours. A senior politician told the BBC top party leaders are trying **to work out temporary arrangements** for a head of state's position but he said that, even if that's not agreed today, **the republic will be voted in**.

The politician said King Gyanendra is concerned about his own security today and in the future and that he's likely to be given **an ultimatum** of fifteen days to leave the royal palace.

Charles Haviland, BBC News, Kathmandu

Vocabulary and definitions

The stage is set	here, all the necessary preparations have been made
cordons of police	lines of police and their vehicles surrounding an area to control access to it
body armour	strong protective covering for the body
shields	large flat objects made of strong plastic that police officers hold in front of their bodies to protect themselves
razor wire	a thin metal thread with sharp pieces of metal fixed along its length, used for fences and barriers
slogans	short distinctive phrases used to identify an organisation and/or its goals
The key vote	the main/most important vote (here, on getting rid of the King and turning Nepal into a republic)
to work out temporary arrangements	here, to devise and agree the way in which the new head of state will carry out his duties over the next few weeks
the republic will be voted in	the assembly's majority will vote for Nepal becoming a republic
an ultimatum	here, if the King does not leave the palace within fifteen days of his own accord, he will be made to leave by using force

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http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/newsenglish/witn/2008/05/080528_nepal.shtml